

**CLAIMS**

1 1. A system for generating digitized documents for a digital environment  
2 comprising:

3 at least one scanner provided with a local operator control unit;

4 a management unit operatively connected to said scanner and including

5 - inputting means for receiving, from the digital environment, a request  
6 for a digitized document,

7 - warning means for communicating a request for a digitized document  
8 to said scanner,

9 - receiving means for receiving from said scanner an acceptance of a  
10 request selected via said local operator control unit, and

11 - allocation means whereby, in response to the acceptance, a scan  
12 order for generation of the digitized document requested in the  
13 selected request is allocated to said scanner which sent the  
14 acceptance.

1 2. The system according to claim 1, wherein said receiving means includes:

2 - means for receiving from a first scanner an inquiry concerning information  
3 regarding a request,

4 - means for offering the requested information, and

5 - means for receiving from the first scanner an acceptance of a request  
6 selected with the aid of the local operator control means of the first scanner.

1 3. The system according to claim 1, wherein said management unit is also  
2 provided with means for checking whether the requested digitized document is  
3 already available in a required digital form in a connected database.

1 4. The system according to claim 1, wherein said allocation means, when  
2 allocating the said scan order, prevents other scanners from accepting the request  
3 concerned for a digitized document.

1 5. The system according to claim 1, wherein the request for a digitized  
2 document also contains a specification of required properties and format of the  
3 document.

14. The system according to claim 1, wherein said management unit is provided with means for indicating a request for a digitized document only to scanners which are capable of executing a scanning process in accordance with the request.

1           15. The system according to claim 1, wherein said management unit is  
2 provided with means for automatically dividing a first request for a digitized  
3 document into a plurality of second requests with different specifications.

1           16. The system according to claim 15, wherein said management unit is  
2 provided with means for assembling digitized partial documents generated in  
3 response to the second requests, to form a digitized document corresponding to the  
4 first request.

1           17. A management unit for managing a system for generating digitized  
2 documents having at least one scanner provided with a local operator control unit,  
3 comprising:

- 4           - inputting means for receiving, from the digital environment, a request  
5           for a digitized document,
- 6           - warning means for communicating a request for a digitized document  
7           to the scanner,
- 8           - receiving means for receiving from the scanner an acceptance of a  
9           request selected via the local operator control unit, and
- 10          - allocation means whereby, in response to the acceptance, a scan  
11          order for generation of the digitized document requested in the  
12          selected request is allocated to the scanner which sent the  
13          acceptance.

1           18. The management unit according to claim 17, wherein said  
2 receiving means includes:

- 3           - means for receiving from a first scanner an inquiry concerning information  
4           regarding a request,
- 5           - means for offering the requested information, and
- 6           - means for receiving from the first scanner an acceptance of a request  
7           selected with the aid of the local operator control means of the first scanner.

1           19. The management unit according to claim 17, further comprising:

2           means for checking whether the requested digitized document is already  
3 available in a required digital form in a connected database.

1       20. The management unit according to claim 17, wherein said allocation  
2 means, when allocating the said scan order, prevents other scanners from  
3 accepting the request concerned for a digitized document.

1       21. The management unit according to claim 17, further comprising means  
2 for indicating a request for a digitized document only to scanners which are capable  
3 of executing a scanning process in accordance with the request.

1       22. The management unit according to claim 17, further comprising  
2 means for automatically dividing a first request for a digitized document into  
3 a plurality of second requests with different specifications.

1       23. The management unit according to claim 22, further comprising:  
2 means for assembling digitized partial documents generated in response to  
3 the second requests, to form a digitized document corresponding to the first  
4 request.

1       24. A method of making digitized documents available to a digital  
2 environment, comprising:

- 3       - receiving a request for a digitized document from the digital environment in a  
4 central management unit;  
5       - automatically indicating from the central management unit to one or more  
6 connected scanners that a request for a digitized document has been  
7 received;  
8       - selecting and accepting the request with the aid of local operator control  
9 means of a first scanner;  
10       - in response to acceptance of the request, automatically allocating a scan  
11 order by the central management unit to the accepting first scanner for  
12 generation of the digitized document requested in the request; and  
13       - executing the scan order on the first scanner.

1       25. The method according to claim 24, wherein said step of selecting and  
2 accepting a request comprises:

- 3       - inquiring, with the aid of the local operator control means of the first scanner,

100  
 101  
 102  
 103  
 104  
 105  
 106  
 107  
 108  
 109  
 110  
 111  
 112  
 113  
 114  
 115  
 116  
 117  
 118  
 119  
 120  
 121  
 122  
 123  
 124  
 125  
 126  
 127  
 128  
 129  
 130  
 131  
 132  
 133  
 134  
 135  
 136  
 137  
 138  
 139  
 140  
 141  
 142  
 143  
 144  
 145  
 146  
 147  
 148  
 149  
 150  
 151  
 152  
 153  
 154  
 155  
 156  
 157  
 158  
 159  
 160  
 161  
 162  
 163  
 164  
 165  
 166  
 167  
 168  
 169  
 170  
 171  
 172  
 173  
 174  
 175  
 176  
 177  
 178  
 179  
 180  
 181  
 182  
 183  
 184  
 185  
 186  
 187  
 188  
 189  
 190  
 191  
 192  
 193  
 194  
 195  
 196  
 197  
 198  
 199  
 200  
 201  
 202  
 203  
 204  
 205  
 206  
 207  
 208  
 209  
 210  
 211  
 212  
 213  
 214  
 215  
 216  
 217  
 218  
 219  
 220  
 221  
 222  
 223  
 224  
 225  
 226  
 227  
 228  
 229  
 230  
 231  
 232  
 233  
 234  
 235  
 236  
 237  
 238  
 239  
 240  
 241  
 242  
 243  
 244  
 245  
 246  
 247  
 248  
 249  
 250  
 251  
 252  
 253  
 254  
 255  
 256  
 257  
 258  
 259  
 260  
 261  
 262  
 263  
 264  
 265  
 266  
 267  
 268  
 269  
 270  
 271  
 272  
 273  
 274  
 275  
 276  
 277  
 278  
 279  
 280  
 281  
 282  
 283  
 284  
 285  
 286  
 287  
 288  
 289  
 290  
 291  
 292  
 293  
 294  
 295  
 296  
 297  
 298  
 299  
 300  
 301  
 302  
 303  
 304  
 305  
 306  
 307  
 308  
 309  
 310  
 311  
 312  
 313  
 314  
 315  
 316  
 317  
 318  
 319  
 320  
 321  
 322  
 323  
 324  
 325  
 326  
 327  
 328  
 329  
 330  
 331  
 332  
 333  
 334  
 335  
 336  
 337  
 338  
 339  
 340  
 341  
 342  
 343  
 344  
 345  
 346  
 347  
 348  
 349  
 350  
 351  
 352  
 353  
 354  
 355  
 356  
 357  
 358  
 359  
 360  
 361  
 362  
 363  
 364  
 365  
 366  
 367  
 368  
 369  
 370  
 371  
 372  
 373  
 374  
 375  
 376  
 377  
 378  
 379  
 380  
 381  
 382  
 383  
 384  
 385  
 386  
 387  
 388  
 389  
 390  
 391  
 392  
 393  
 394  
 395  
 396  
 397  
 398  
 399  
 400  
 401  
 402  
 403  
 404  
 405  
 406  
 407  
 408  
 409  
 410  
 411  
 412  
 413  
 414  
 415  
 416  
 417  
 418  
 419  
 420  
 421  
 422  
 423  
 424  
 425  
 426  
 427  
 428  
 429  
 430  
 431  
 432  
 433  
 434  
 435  
 436  
 437  
 438  
 439  
 440  
 441  
 442  
 443  
 444  
 445  
 446  
 447  
 448  
 449  
 450  
 451  
 452  
 453  
 454  
 455  
 456  
 457  
 458  
 459  
 460  
 461  
 462  
 463  
 464  
 465  
 466  
 467  
 468  
 469  
 470  
 471  
 472  
 473  
 474  
 475  
 476  
 477  
 478  
 479  
 480  
 481  
 482  
 483  
 484  
 485  
 486  
 487  
 488  
 489  
 490  
 491  
 492  
 493  
 494  
 495  
 496  
 497  
 498  
 499  
 500  
 501  
 502  
 503  
 504  
 505  
 506  
 507  
 508  
 509  
 510  
 511  
 512  
 513  
 514  
 515  
 516  
 517  
 518  
 519  
 520  
 521  
 522  
 523  
 524  
 525  
 526  
 527  
 528  
 529  
 530  
 531  
 532  
 533  
 534  
 535  
 536  
 537  
 538  
 539  
 540  
 541  
 542  
 543  
 544  
 545  
 546  
 547  
 548  
 549  
 550  
 551  
 552  
 553  
 554  
 555  
 556  
 557  
 558  
 559  
 560  
 561  
 562  
 563  
 564  
 565  
 566  
 567  
 568  
 569  
 570  
 571  
 572  
 573  
 574  
 575  
 576  
 577  
 578  
 579  
 580  
 581  
 582  
 583  
 584  
 585  
 586  
 587  
 588  
 589  
 590  
 591  
 592  
 593  
 594  
 595  
 596  
 597  
 598  
 599  
 600  
 601  
 602  
 603  
 604  
 605  
 606  
 607  
 608  
 609  
 610  
 611

1           27. The method according to claim 24, wherein in allocating the scan order  
2   other scanners are prevented from accepting the relevant request for a digitized  
3   document.

29. The method according to claim 24, wherein on allocation of the scan order the specification belonging to the associated request is automatically transmitted from the central management unit to the accepting first scanner.

1           30. The method according to claim 24, wherein simultaneously with  
2   indicating that the request for a digitized document has been requested the  
3   specification belonging to the request is automatically transmitted to applicable  
4   scanners.

31. The method according to claim 29, wherein after allocation of a scan order the scanning process for generating the required digitized document on the first scanner is automatically adjusted in accordance with the specification in the request.

1           32. The method according to claim 24, wherein the request for a digitized  
2 document also contains a message to an operator of the scanner.

1           33. The method according to claim 24, wherein the request for a digitized  
2 document also contains a precondition for processing.

1           34. The method according to claim 33, wherein the precondition is used by  
2 the management unit as a contributory factor in indicating the received requests for  
3 a digitized document.

1           35. The method according to claim 24, wherein the indication that the  
2 request for a digitized document has been received is made in the form of a signal  
3 perceptible to an operator.

1           36. The method according to claim 24, wherein the indication that the  
2 request for a digitized document has been received is made in the form of a  
3 message on a display on the scanner.

1           37. The method according to claim 24, wherein the request for a digitized  
2 document is indicated only at scanners which are capable of executing a scanning  
3 process in accordance with the request.

1           38. The method according to claim 24, further comprising dividing a first  
2 request for a digitized document into a plurality of second requests with different  
3 specifications.

1           39. The method according to claim 38, wherein the central management unit  
2 assembles digitized part-documents generated in response to the second requests,  
3 to form a digitized document corresponding to the first request.